

MidStart Handbook 2024

Applying for a postgraduate midwifery student position in NSW Health

health.nsw.gov.au/MidStart



Welcome

A very warm welcome to the 2024 edition of the MidStart Handbook.



NSW Health continues to build and sustain a strong midwifery workforce and we are delighted that you are considering becoming a midwife.

Midwifery is a dynamic and rewarding career. Midwives practise within many models and settings to care for women and their families at a very significant time in their lives. NSW Health's Nursing and Midwifery Office coordinates MidStart. This is the state-wide recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital.

This handbook will help you to apply for one of these positions. It is important to keep in mind that university enrolment to undertake midwifery studies is a separate process which you will undertake yourself.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well as you embark on this exciting next step in your career.

Jacqui Cross

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

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Key Recruitment Dates in 2023



April

> Look into training locations (hospitals) and participating universities.

May

Applications open9am Tuesday 23 May

June

- > Applications close 11:59 pm Monday 5 June
- Applicants for interview notified on Monday 19 June
- Applicants to accept/ decline invitation to interview by Friday
 23 June

July

> Interviews conducted in 2022 between 3 – 14 July

August

- All candidates notified of recruitment outcome
 Monday 21 August
- > Successful candidates sent conditional offer Tuesday 22 August
- Successful applicants accept or decline offers by Friday25 August

September

- Eligible Applicants' Bank opens to employers
 Monday 4 September
- > Employment contracts sent to successful applicants by Friday 29 September

The moment you see a new baby come into the world, with the family, still to this day will give me tears and shivers.

Chandler, Registered Midwife

A Career in Midwifery

What is a midwife?

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM, 2017) defines the midwife and their scope of practice.

A midwife is recognised internationally as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife's own responsibility and to provide care to the newborn and the infant.

This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures.

Using the principles of midwifery continuity of care, primary health care and cultural safety, the midwife has an important task in health counselling and education, not only for the woman, but also within the family and community.

This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to women's health, sexual or reproductive health and childcare.

A midwife may practise in any setting including home, community, hospitals, clinics or health units.



Mentoring in Midwifery (MiM)

NSW Health has implemented a mentoring program for all midwives working in NSW Maternity services.

Our vision is to develop and implement an innovative, sustainable mentoring program that can be embedded into midwifery practice. This program will be transferable across all midwifery training and clinical facilities to become a normal part of midwifery culture in NSW. This program will support the midwifery profession, develop leadership at all levels and help in the retention of a strong, confident and skilled midwifery workforce.

The overall aim of this program is to develop a reciprocal learning relationship that expands opportunities for connection, learning and growth for midwives and midwifery students.

The program is designed around a number of phases aimed at enhancing learning in midwifery through a relationship centred approach. Processes for continuous reflection, learning and feedback are woven into the program.

The intended outcome is that mentors and mentees experience a sense of safety, belonging, achievement, significance, purpose and continuity (Senses Framework).

As a midwifery student working in NSW Health, you have the opportunity to have a mentor who has developed skills to enhance your learning in midwifery.



How to become a midwife

On entry to practice, the midwife is a regulated health practitioner who holds registration as a midwife with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA). In Australia, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) protects the title 'midwife'.

In NSW, there are currently two educational pathways to become a registered midwife:

- 1. Completion of a Bachelor of Midwifery program.
- 2. Completion of a postgraduate midwifery program.

A Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) is eligible to apply to the second pathway. In NSW Health, MidStart is the process used to access this pathway. The MidStart process is not applicable to the first pathway.

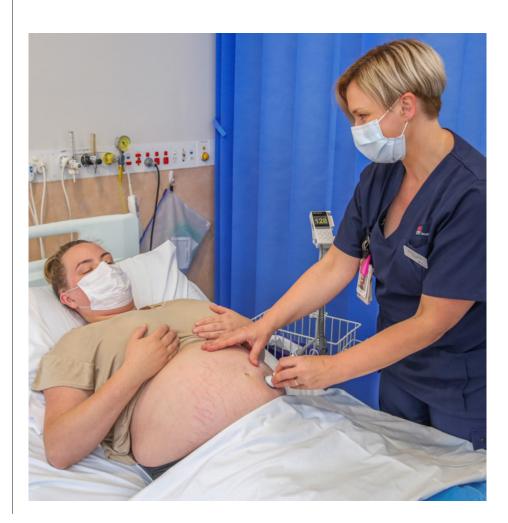
To become a midwife utilising the MidStart process, registered nurses are enrolled in a recognised postgraduate midwifery program at one of six partnering universities while being concurrently employed in a dedicated midwifery student position in a NSW public maternity service. A postgraduate midwifery program varies between twelve months and two years.

The salary paid as a postgraduate midwifery student (once verification has occurred) will reflect your years of service as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) and in accordance with the NSW Public Health System Nurses' and Midwives' (State) Award 2019.

As a registered nurse I dreamt of becoming a midwife following my positive experiences during a maternity placement as a student. Once I made the change, I was genuinely welcomed and encouraged by the women, their families and our midwifery colleagues.

At every stage of the clinical program I felt supported and nurtured by these colleagues to acquire the skills, language and confidence to work in true partnership with women and their families. It has been such a rewarding and fulfilling career move.

Postgraduate midwifery student



Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for MidStart you must be:

- An Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident (New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a current Special Category Visa are considered to have permanent residency status).
- A Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the NMBA at the time of application.

Check your eligibility to apply for a MidStart position by completing the following <u>survey</u>.

Being a postgraduate midwifery student

Students are provided with a variety of midwifery practice experiences over the course of the program. This is inclusive of experience gained in providing continuity of care by establishing, maintaining, and concluding a professional relationship with a number of women through their pregnancy, labour and birth, and the postnatal period. This clinical experience may, at times, be in addition to your contracted hours of employment.

A typical week will consist of:

- Allocating time for study and completion of university assessment tasks.
- Attending university classes

 either weekly or as a
 residential school, depending on the university in which you are enrolled.
- Attending educational opportunities provided for midwifery students and other staff within your training hospital.
- Working closely with registered midwives and other clinicians in the development of midwifery skills.

- Using your diary to ensure that you have allocated time for your Continuity of Care experiences around your 7 day rotating roster and university commitments.
- Negotiating with Midwifery Unit Managers to maximise your attendance at the births of the women you have recruited for your Continuity of Care experiences.
- Travel related to attending antenatal visits, births, and postnatal care of your Continuity of Care women.

Self-care strategies will be important for you undertaking a program that combines work and study. A useful strategy is to consider the support that your family/close friends can provide during your year as a midwifery student. You may also experience some adjustments as you become accustomed to being a student again.



By joining the midwifery profession, you are embarking on a career that is rewarding and fulfilling. To me, being a midwife is a privilege, working in a women-centred philosophy that includes the whole family.

Richard, Midwifery Educator

Preparing Your Application

When preparing your application there are several things to consider including recruitment requirements, training and study locations, and addressing the selection criteria.

Recruitment requirements

As part of the NSW Health MidStart recruitment process you will be required to provide the following:

Curriculum Vitae	Outlining your educational qualifications and work experience.
Identification	Evidence of identification and permanent residency, such as passport, Australian birth certificate, and citizenship certificate and visa information.
Working with Children Check	A NSW Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance number for paid work. Applicants are required to enter the WWCC clearance number or, at a minimum, application number for a WWCC into the online application.
Immunisation	Evidence of current immunisation status. For more information, refer to NSW Health policy.
Referee checks	Applicants must include the names and contact details of two referees, of which one referee must be your current or most recent manager. For more information, refer to MSW Health policy .

Training and study locations

Applicants can enter up to six (6) preferred hospital sites in their online application. It is important that you carefully consider the hospital/s where you wish to apply for a midwifery student position, as well as your preferred education provider.

Some Local Health Districts/ hospitals may have partnerships with specific universities. This means that students studying at a particular university may only be able to undertake midwifery training at linked hospitals. It is important to understand any existing arrangements with both the universities and the hospitals prior to making your preferences in your application. Please refer to individual university websites for more information. Training in rural hospitals may include periods of rotation to larger facilities to ensure you gain the required clinical experience. Consider the distance required to travel to your preferred hospital to complete Continuity of Care experiences as well as your rostered shifts.

University	Post Graduate Midwifery Course	Program coordinator contact	Mid-year intake*
Australian Catholic University	Bachelor of Midwifery (graduate entry)	Shahla.Meedya@acu.edu.au	TBA
Charles Sturt University	Graduate Diploma of Midwifery	ask@csu.edu.au	✓
University of Newcastle	Master of Midwifery (graduate entry)	Liz.Newnham@newcastle.edu.au	
University of Notre Dame Australia	Graduate Diploma of Midwifery	kirstie.balding@nd.edu.au	✓
University of Technology Sydney	Graduate Diploma in Midwifery	Loretta.Musgrave@uts.edu.au	
Western Sydney University	Graduate Diploma in Midwifery	l.luck@westernsydney.edu.au	

^{*}All partnering universities commence study programs at the beginning of the academic year. Some universities also offer a mid-year intake. **Note:** if you have applied to MidStart or GradStart before, employment preferences chosen last time may have pre-populated into this year's application. Delete these preferences and choose again from the current offerings.

Selection Criteria

As part of your application, you will be asked to address **each of the six (6) selection criteria** demonstrating your ability to meet each one. Address each of the selection criteria in 150 words or less. While the ROB system allows space to provide a greater word limit, the MidStart Campaign limits responses to 150 words only. Your responses will be reviewed as part of the selection process. It is important that you give each selection criteria thoughtful consideration.

Tip: The online application may time out before you have an opportunity to save your work. It is recommended that you prepare your responses in advance using a word document, then copy and paste these into the online application.

The Selection Criteria are:

- 1. Demonstrated understanding of the role of the midwife within a primary healthcare framework.
- 2. Demonstrated understanding and commitment to the requirements of the midwifery tertiary and clinical program including Continuity of Care experiences.
- **3.** Demonstrated high level interpersonal, verbal, and written communication skills that support effective collaboration across the interdisciplinary team.
- 4. Demonstrated clinical problem-solving abilities.
- **5.** Demonstrated understanding of NSW Health CORE Values Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment in providing quality care to women and their babies.
- **6.** Demonstrated understanding of the role of the midwife in applying work health and safety, infection control and quality improvement principles.

Important Points:

- The process of enrolling in a postgraduate midwifery program at university is your responsibility and completely separate to MidStart.
- Mid-year intakes are offered at some Local Health Districts/ hospitals and select universities.
- Some positions may require a valid driver's license (eg: rural and community).
- If you are required to attend residential school, this may not form part of your employment contract.

Links to Local Health Districts/ hospitals and NSW university websites can be found on the MidStart webpage: www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/ Pages/midstart.aspx



The Application and Recruitment Process

The following information is about application and recruitment via MidStart and in gaining employment as a midwifery student in a training location.

Please be sure to use a supported web browser such as Chrome or Firefox on a Windows or MAC device to complete your application.

Applying Online

Applications for the NSW Health 2024 MidStart will open from 9am Tuesday 23 May 2023 and close at 11:59 pm on Monday 5 June 2023.

You will be able to access the Career Portal directly from <u>here</u> when applications open. Please bookmark or save this web site as we make regular updates.

For assistance using our Career Portal please watch the Nursing and Midwifery Office GradStart and MidStart Annual Recruitment Career Portal video.

Instructions:

- · Go to Apply Online
- Click onto the Job Title to review the job description then click on Apply. Review and accept the privacy agreement.
- On the Log in page you will be presented with instructions depending on whether you are a current NSW Health employee, a previous NSW Health employee, or an external applicant (either with an existing account or as a new user). Follow the instructions carefully.
- Only new users will need to set up an account. Do not register a new account if you already have one. If you have forgotten your username or password, use the links below the Password field to re-set.

Key points to remember:

- 1. MidStart recruitment process. In some services, there are many more applications than positions. To increase the likelihood of a successful application, ensure you are flexible when choosing options for training positions and make best use of the opportunity to enter up to six hospitals in order of preference in your online application.
- 2. Attention to detail is important. Ensure you enter your personal details correctly which includes the first and last name you are known by. This information is used for employment screening purposes.
- 3. You will need a valid email address. Email is the primary communication in which employers will contact you throughout the recruitment process. Hotmail and live. com.au email addresses are blocked by some employers so it is strongly recommended that you consider an alternative to these.

- 4. NSW Health will communicate with you via SMS as part of the recruitment process.

 Texts will be sent from NSWHCareers. Please provide the Country Code along with your 9-digit Mobile Number in your application. Please leave off the "0" and enter your number with no spaces, for example: 61XXXXXXXXXX.
- 5. To update personal information, existing NSW Health employees can do so through StaffLink. External applicants can do so via 'My Profile' on the Career Portal.
- 6. Editing your application.
 You can edit your online
 application after submission
 as many times as you like
 up until applications close.
- 7. Your online application must be submitted to be considered. Ensure you complete each section of the application as prompted and submit the completed application prior to applications closing. You will receive an email confirmation of your completed application.
- 8. Late applications will not be accepted. Once applications close, you will no longer have access to your application.

Interview and selection

Interviews will be held statewide between Monday 3 July and Friday 14 July 2023. Specific times and dates will vary within this timeframe between locations. You will be invited to attend an interview by the training location you selected as first preference in the online application.

- Applicants will be invited to interview via email on Monday 19 June 2023.
- Applicants must accept or decline their interview attendance by Friday 23 June 2023.

You will also receive a separate email titled 'Pre-Employment checks'. Please click on the link within the email to complete this information.

Interviews may be offered face-toface, virtually, or a combination of both. This is determined at a local level and you will be notified by the Local Health District how interviews will be conducted. Contact the coordinator at the Local Health District if you are unable to attend your interview or need assistance.

If you do not attend your interview and have not contacted the coordinator to decline your invitation to interview, your application will be withdrawn.

Seeking feedback

All applicants are encouraged to seek feedback.

If you are placed on the Eligible Applicants' Bank or made unsuccessful in this recruitment process you are encouraged to seek feedback from the contact person provided in your interview outcome letter.

This is an excellent opportunity to learn about your areas for future development and increase your potential as a strong candidate if you wish to apply to MidStart in the future.

Recruitment outcomes

Applicants will be considered according to merit and selected following a competitive process.

Applicants will be advised of their recruitment outcome by email on **Monday 21 August 2023.**

You will be advised of one of the following outcomes:

- You are successful and have been offered a position at a particular hospital.
- 2. You have been placed on the **Eligible Applicants' Bank** for allocation if positions become available.
- You are not successful in this recruitment process. You are welcome to apply to future recruitment opportunities.

If you are successful, you will receive a second email **Tuesday 22 August 2023** from the recruitment system containing the web link for you to accept or decline the offer.

You will need to accept the offer online by **Friday 25 August 2023** or the offer will be withdrawn.

You can also accept or decline the offer by navigating to the NSW Health Career Portal: NSW Health Employees <u>here</u> Candidates external to NSW Health here.

Go to 'My Applications', entering your username and password to access your job profile. Click on the job title to open up tasks for this job and to access the offer.

Important: Acceptance of offer, verbal or written, to the employer will not be accepted.

Remember: You cannot commence employment as a postgraduate midwifery student if you are not enrolled in an approved university program. To enrol at university, you will be asked to provide a copy of your employment contract. Refer to page 7 for university contact details.

Employment contracts (letter of offer) will be forwarded to you via an online link by **29 September 2023.**

For instructions on how to accept and print your letter of offer, please visit this Quick Reference Guide.

Eligible Applicants' Bank

If you have been placed on the Eligible Applicants' Bank, you are eligible for employment but have not been allocated a position during first round selections. Employers use the Eligible Applicants' Bank to fill vacant positions. Vacancies may occur due to positions being declined or applicants withdrawing from the recruitment. Managers are invited to fill vacancies drawing from the Eligible Applicants' Bank from Monday 4 September 2023. The Eligible Applicants' Bank remains open until the end of May 2024 or until all positions are filled; whichever occurs first.

2024 MidStart Handbook FAQs

How can I check if I am eligible to apply for MidStart 2024?

Go to the following link to check your eligibility to apply to MidStart https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ YG263ND

For more information, refer to the MidStart Handbook, page 6.

I am an international student. Am I eligible to apply to MidStart?

You must be an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident to apply to MidStart. New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a current Special Category Visa are considered to have permanent residency status.

I live outside NSW. Am I eligible to apply to MidStart?

Yes, you are eligible to apply for MidStart if you live outside NSW. Only universities and hospitals situated within NSW take part in MidStart. You must undertake employment as a midwifery student in NSW.

Can I start preparing my application before MidStart applications officially open?

Yes. Applications open online 23
May 2023. All applicants should prepare their application in advance of this date. When preparing your application there are a few things to consider including recruitment requirements, training and study locations, and addressing the selection criteria. See the Application Checklist on page 13 of the MidStart Handbook for guidance.

I am in my final year of Bachelor of Nursing degree. Can I apply to MidStart?

No. You must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board Australia as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) at the time you apply to MidStart.

Do I need experience as a Registered Nurse to apply to MidStart?

Prior experience as a Registered Nurse is not included in the MidStart selection criteria. MidStart is a merit based competitive recruitment process. Employment history and clinical experience is considered in the recruitment process.

I would like to complete GradStart and MidStart at the same time. Is this possible?

No. GradStart offers employment to support new graduate nurses and midwives transition to professional practice. MidStart is the recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital. These are two distinct programs. You cannot complete GradStart and MidStart at the same time. As a graduate registered nurse, you may apply to MidStart for the following year. You must be registered with the Nursing & Midwifery Board Australia as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) at the time you apply to MidStart.

Why am I applying to the NSW Health MidStart Program before I enrol in a postgraduate midwifery program at university?

MidStart is the state-wide annual recruitment process for registered nurses seeking employment as a midwifery student in a NSW public hospital. The recruitment process for MidStart commences the year BEFORE midwifery students commence employment and in advance of university enrolments opening. University enrolment to undertake midwiferv studies is a separate process to MidStart. Enrolment procedures and timelines vary between the NSW Universities who offer an approved postgraduate midwifery program. Please visit their respective web sites for key dates and further information.

I have missed the application closing date. Can I still apply?

No. MidStart is a once yearly statewide application and recruitment process. Applications close 11:59 pm Monday 5 June 2023. Late applications will not be received. You are welcome to apply next year.

Can I request to be employed on reduced hours?

Employment contracts are determined so that students meet the requirements to gain midwifery registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. Requests to be employed at reduced hours must be discussed with the local MidStart Coordinator at your preferred facility and prior to interview.

Do I need to nominate all six preferences for training location in my application?

Applicants must nominate a minimum of one preference of training location in their application.

I have forgotten my password. How can I gain access to the system to complete my application?

If you are a paid employee or paid contractor with NSW Health, your password can be re-set by contacting the Statewide service desk on 1300 28 55 33. If you are not a paid employee or paid contractor with NSW Health, your password can be re-set either via the "forgot your password" link at login or, by contacting the Customer Experience Team on 1300 679 367.



This is the first time I have used the NSW Health Career Portal for a job application. Is there a resource to assist me to use this system?

Yes. For assistance using the Career Portal for your MidStart application, please access the Nursing and Midwifery Office GradStart and MidStart Annual Recruitment Career Portal video found here.

I have been successful in gaining a MidStart position. Does this mean that I will be automatically enrolled into the university of my choice?

No. Application to MidStart for a midwifery student position is a separate process to university enrolment. You must apply to study at university separately. Refer to MidStart Handbook page 7.

I have received a letter from the Local Health District stating I am on the Eligible Applicants' Bank. What does this mean?

Being placed on the Eligible Applicants' Bank means that you are eligible for employment but are not allocated a position. This occurred because of a limited number of positions were available at your preferences. The Eligible Applicants' Bank is open to employers from Monday 4 September 2023 to fill vacancies. These vacancies can occur because other applicants decline position offers or withdraw from the recruitment. The Eligible Applicants Bank will remain open until May 2024. To accept a position during second round, applicants must gain enrolment into an approved postgraduate midwifery program at university.

I was not successful in gaining a MidStart position. Can I apply next year?

Yes. Eligible applicants who have been unsuccessful in gaining a MidStart position can apply again in the future. Applicants are encouraged to seek post interview feedback before re-applying for MidStart.

Do I need to resign from my job to accept a midwifery student position?

Successful MidStart candidates will be employed on a temporary contract by the Local Health District. Applicants should discuss with their current employer their intention to apply to MidStart and future employment arrangements.

Can I take unplanned leave or defer my MidStart program?

Once a candidate is employed any position changes or requests are managed on an individual basis at the employing Local Health District. Discuss any unplanned leave or deferral from the MidStart program with your local MidStart Coordinator.

If I need to attend a residential school as part of my midwifery studies, will I be paid as a midwifery student to attend?

Contact your Local Health District MidStart Coordinator to discuss specific employment arrangements.

MidStart Application Checklist

Tick	Action				
Prior	Prior to applications opening, I have:				
	Downloaded and read MidStart Handbook				
	Checked that I am eligible to apply to MidStart 2024? https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YG263ND				
	Marked all key recruitment dates in my diary				
	$Researched\ participating\ universities\ \underline{www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/Pages/midstart.aspx}$				
	Marked course application dates with my preferred university/ies in my diary				
	$Researched\ participating\ employers\ \underline{www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/Pages/midstart.aspx}$				
	Contacted MidStart Coordinator/s in my preferred Local Health District/s to gather more information www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/Pages/midstart.aspx				
	Discussed with current employer my intention to apply to MidStart				
	Chosen my hospital preferences for training				
	Updated my Curriculum Vitae				
	Checked that I have a current NSW Working With Children Check (WWCC for paid employment) https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/working-children-check				
	Checked my compliance with NSW Health Immunisation requirements https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2022_030.pdf				
	Appropriate evidence of identification www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2019_003.pdf				
	Permission from my two referees to provide a reference				
	Read and familiarised myself with the six selection criteria (page 8 in handbook)				
	Drafted my responses in how I meet each selection criterion (max. 150 words) into a word document				
	Checked my supplied email address is not Hotmail or @live.com.au				
When applications open, I have:					
	Applied online to MidStart recruitment from Tuesday 23 May 2023 . Watch the video <u>here</u> to learn how to apply through the MidStart Career Portal				
	Saved any incomplete application so that I can return to it later to complete				
	Submitted my completed application by 11:59 pm Monday 5 June 2023				
	Received an auto-generated email from NSW Health recruitment system, confirming successful submission of my application				
	Checked my availability to attend interview at my preferred location (preference 1) between 3 – 14 July 2023				
If suc	ccessful in gaining an interview, I have:				
	Confirmed my attendance at interview by Friday 23 June 2023				
	Reviewed the selection criteria and prepared for interview				
	Gathered employment screening documents, as requested by the interviewing facility, ready to take along to interview				
On offer of employment, I have:					
	Accepted or declined offer of employment online by Friday 25 August 2023				
	If accepting offer, provided evidence of confirmed position to the program coordinator at my preferred university				



"I love that no matter what birth, what experience, whatever's happening, it's always different every day."

Jenna Clinical Midwifery Educator





NSW Ministry of Health

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